

19 June 1984

NOTE FOR: [redacted]
Executive Development Staff/OTE

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FROM: [redacted]
Executive Assistant to the DDCI

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In the for what it's worth department, I thought I'd pass on some thoughts on last week's Levinson's Seminar. I wasn't sure where our evaluations would end up, and they didn't cover everything.

First, I thought the seminar was very useful and would highly recommend it for all new SISers in particular as well as GS-15s with significant management responsibilities.

I would strongly urge you not to shorten the course. First, people taking that course probably do not get away to training that often. In my case, it has been about four years. It takes a certain amount of time to disengage from the daily routine and open one's mind to a learning opportunity. Shortening the course will not allow that process to happen. More importantly, it would destroy the effectiveness of the small group work, which to me and my group colleagues captured the essence of the course. As you know, it also takes time for group dynamics to unfold -- for trust and mutual respect to develop. Two-three days will not be sufficient for that to happen. The group work gives students an opportunity to apply the theories they're learning to tough, everyday problems. To me, this is where the real learning takes place, and I'd hate to see that lost. Maybe you could try to participate in a seminar elsewhere so you could experience the benefits of the small groups firsthand.

Including the cases from the Agency is laudable. I would urge you, however, to work with the Levinson people ahead of time so that they'll know what they have to work with and so that they can work with you to ensure the cases include the concepts they're trying to get across. As [redacted] mentioned to you, I think, our group had some cases that would be excellent for learning purposes.

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Also, I would suggest that you not advise people to create a generic problem. That is not workable. My situation was probably an anomaly that won't come up very often. You should encourage people to write up a situation in which they are personally involved, emphasizing that the tougher the situation, the more they are likely to profit from the exercise.

You could probably help the Levinson people make their sessions more relevant by briefing them beforehand on the current milieu of the Agency. They should have been aware, for example, of the Excellence Program and that major personnel changes were unfolding as they spoke.

At the risk of beating a dead horse, anything you can do to improve the setting -- magic markers that work, using mikes, discouraging distracting conversations, typing and laughter from the back of the room, et cetera, would be very helpful.

Really did get a lot out of it.

Thanks,



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